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Message Text

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PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 /082 W
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R 111624Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5456
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMCONSUL LENINGRAD
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MOSCOW 19193

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, CSCE, SHUM, UR -
SUBJECT: RECENT REFUSENIK TRIALS AND SOVIET
ANTI-SEMITISM

SUMMARY: CONCERN THAT RECENT REFUSENIK TRIALS, PARTICULARLY THAT OF ANATOLIY SHCHARANSKIY, WOULD BE USED TO PROMOTE ANTI-SEMITISM HAS, IN THE VIEW OF MOSCOW'S REFUSENIKS AND WESTERN OBSERVERS, NOT BEEN BORNE OUT BY EVENTS. DESPITE THE FACT THAT THEY HAVE NOT OBSERVED ANY SHARP, RECENT INCREASES IN EXPRESSIONS OF ANTI-SEMITISM, REFUSENIKS ARE CONVINCED THAT
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LONGER TERM TRENDS INDICATE THAT IT IS BOTH ENDEMIC AND GROWING. END SUMMARY.

1. MANY OBSERVERS, REFUSENIKS INCLUDED, WERE CONCERNED THAT THE TRIAL OF ANATOLIY SHCHARANSKIY WOULD BE THE OCCASION FOR A SOVIET GOVERNMENT EFFORT TO PLAY UPON OR EVEN WHIP UP ANTI-SEMITIC SENTIMENTS

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AMONG THE SOVIET POPULATION. MOST AGREE THAT THE ACTUAL EVENTS OF THE TRIAL PROVIDED LITTLE TO SUPPORT THIS EXPECTATION. REFUSENIKS, WHOSE ANTENNAE ARE FINELY TUNED TO ANTI-SEMITIC NUANCES, ALMOST UNIVERSALLY SUPPORT THIS INTERPRETATION, ALTHOUGH THEY DO NOT ATTRIBUTE THE LACK OF EXTERNAL MANIFESTATIONS OF ANTI-SEMITISM TO ANY GOOD-WILL ON THE PART OF THE LEADERSHIP. RATHER, THEY ATTRIBUTE IT TO A SOVIET EFFORT TO LIMIT WESTERN SUPPORT FOR SHCHARANSKIY BY PRESENTING HIM NOT AS SOMETHING UNIQUE--A JEWISH REFUSENIK ON TRIAL FOR TREASON --BUT AS SIMPLY ONE MORE OF THE APPROXIMATELY SCORE OF HELSINKI MONITORING GROUP MEMBERS ALREADY IMPRISONED OR TRIED THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY.

2. AS THEY ANALYZE THE IDA NUDEL AND VLADIMIR SLEPAK EXILE SENTENCES (FOUR AND FIVE YEARS, RESPECTIVELY), REFUSENIKS, WHILE BELIEVING THAT THE SENTENCES ARE BASICALLY UNJUST, CONSIDER THAT THEY MANIFEST NOT ANTI-SEMITISM, BUT SOVIET CONCERN FOR THE FOREIGN REACTION TO HOW THE AUTHORITIES TREAT JEWS. THEY BELIEVE THAT A RUSSIAN OR A UKRAINIAN, FOR EXAMPLE, WOULD HAVE RECEIVED A FAR STRICTER SENTENCE FOR THE SAME BEHAVIOR.

3. REFUSENIKS FIND NUMEROUS OTHER INDICATORS, HOWEVER, CONFIDENTIAL

THAT ANTI-SEMITISM IS A REAL AND WORRISOME PHENOMENON IN SOVIET SOCIETY. EXTERNAL MANIFESTATIONS OF ANTI-SEMITISM ON WHICH WE HAVE PREVIOUSLY REPORTED INCLUDE:

--INCREASING DIFFICULTY IN GAINING ACCESS TO THE MORE PRESTIGIOUS EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND THE MORE DESIRABLE PROFESSIONS (77 MOSCOW 17094).
--PUBLICATION OF A NEW ANTI-ZIONIST BOOK, "WILD WORMWOOD", WITH AN APPROVING REVIEW IN THE NATIONALLY PUBLISHED SOVIET INTELLECTUAL WEEKLY "LITERATURNAYA GAZETA" (77 MOSCOW 4652).

--A NATIONALLY TELEVISED ANTI-ZIONIST DOCUMENTARY, "SOUL BUYERS" (77 MOSCOW 1511).

--AN ANTI-SEMITIC PAPER REPORTEDLY SUBMITTED TO THE PRESIDIUM OF THE SUPREME SOVIET BY VALERY YEMELYANOV, A NOTORIOUS ANTI-SEMITE (MOSCOW 10547).
--A CONTROVERSY WITH ANTI-SEMITIC OVERTONES DURING A MEETING OF THE CRITICS DIVISION OF THE UNION OF WRITERS (MOSCOW A-60).

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4. THE TREND TOWARD MORE OPEN EXPRESSION OF ANTI-
SEMITIC FEELINGS IS A MUCH LONGER TERM PHENOMENON,
ACCORDING TO REFUSENIKS, THAN THE APPROXIMATELY
EIGHTEEN MONTHS COVERED BY THE EXTERNAL MANIFESTATIONS
CITED ABOVE. EXPRESSIONS OF ANTI-SEMITISM, WHICH (LIKE
EXPRESSIONS OF ALMOST ANY POLITICAL OR SOCIAL VIEWS OR
PREJUDICES) WERE RARE DURING THE STALIN ERA, HAVE BEEN
GRADUALLY INCREASING EVER SINCE, AND CURRENT MANIFESTA-
TIONS OF ANTI-SEMITISM REPRESENT IN THEIR VIEW A STAGE
IN THAT PROGRESSION RATHER THAN A SUDDEN, LARGE INCREASE
THE POINT HAS BEEN REACHED IN THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF
AVERAGE SOVIETS, SAY OUR SOURCES, THAT THE WORD "JEW"
IS ITSELF CONSIDERED BAD AND IS FREQUENTLY SPOKEN IN A
WHISPER. SOVIET PROFESSIONALS, WHEN SPEAKING TO JEWSIH
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COLLEAGUES, DO NOT REFER TO THEM OR TO THEIR FELLOW JEWS AS SUCH, BUT INSTEAD USE EUPHEMISMS, SUCH AS "YOUR PEOPLE".

5. REFUSENIKS DOUBT THE POSSIBILITY OF ANY SIGNIFICANT CHANGE FOR THE BETTER OVER THE LONG RUN IN SOVIET ATTITUDES TOWARD JEWS. THEY HOPE SIMPLY THAT A COMBINATION OF OUTSIDE PRESSURE AND TEMPORARY REGIME RELAXATION, PERHAPS DURING A CHANGE OF LEADERSHIP, WILL SUFFICE TO GET THEM AND OTHER JEWS WHO WISH TO EMIGRATE OUT. TRIALS SUCH AS THOSE OF SHCHARANSKIY, NUDEL AND SLEPAK INCREASE REFUSENIKS PESSIMISM ABOUT
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SOVIET SOCIETY AND THEIR DESIRE TO LEAVE, EVEN WHEN THE TRIALS THEMSELVES DO NOT PROVIDE OVERT EVIDENCE OF ANTI-SEMITISM. TOON

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TAGS: PINT, SHUM, UR, CSCE
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Type: TE
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